

## Tennessee Communities Awarded \$1.3 million in EPA Brownfield Grants for 2010

[On April 21 EPA announced](#) that five EPA Brownfields Grants totaling \$1.3 million were awarded to these Tennessee communities:

- The **City of Chattanooga** received two brownfields cleanup grants for \$200,000 each.
- **Hamilton County, Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency, Southeast TN Development District and the City of Chattanooga** received \$250,000 in a coalition assessment grant.
- The **City of Saltillo** received \$250,000 in a community-wide assessment grant.
- **Shelby County** received \$400,000 in a community-wide assessment grant.

[EPA Brownfields assessment, coalition, and revolving loan fund grants](#) are offered on a yearly basis from EPA, where applicants apply in the fall and are typically notified in the spring if they are a recipient of funds. The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation offers free grant-writing workshops across the state where potential applicants can come and learn tips on writing brownfield grant applications. For more information, please contact Paula Larson with the [Tennessee Brownfields Program](#) at [Paula.Larson@tn.gov](mailto:Paula.Larson@tn.gov) or (615) 532-0926.

### More Details about 2010 EPA Brownfield Grant recipients in Tennessee:

#### City of Chattanooga Cleanup Grants

*\$400,000 for hazardous substances*

EPA has selected the City of Chattanooga for two brownfields cleanup grants. Hazardous substances grant funds will be used to clean up the 54-acre Old 36th Street Landfill site at 100 E. 36th Street in the Alton Park neighborhood. The site is contaminated with polyaromatic hydrocarbons, predominantly from foundry sands from numerous foundries in the area. Grant funds will be used to design an effective cleanup plan and support community involvement activities. Grant funds also will be used to clean up the 9.5-acre Old Railroad property consisting of three adjacent parcels, two on Tennessee Avenue and the third on W. 37th Street. The parcels were used for unauthorized dumping before the city acquired them. The site is contaminated primarily with multiple polyaromatic hydrocarbons and metals. Grant funds will be used to clean up area wetlands and support community involvement activities.

#### Community Description

The City of Chattanooga was selected to receive two brownfields cleanup grants. The Alton Park area of Chattanooga (population 155,554) was once home to the foundries, chemical plants, and textile mills that made the city a thriving manufacturing hub. For nearly a century, the area bustled with industrial jobs, local businesses, and residential neighborhoods. As conditions declined, vacant properties in the area and the

Chattanooga Creek were used as illegal dumping sites. The population declined, and today 96 percent of residents are African-American. An estimated 55 percent of Alton Park residents live below the poverty level. A recent inventory of sites has identified more than 206 brownfields. Cleanup of the target sites will reduce human and environmental exposure to contamination and help change the negative perceptions that inhibit reuse of the sites. The city plans to use the Old 36th Street Landfill site, which anchors the planned Chattanooga Creek Greenway, for recreational space. Cleanup of the Old Railroad property will make part of the site suitable for commercial redevelopment, improve the safety of the Alton Park Safe Walk area, and allow for the use of restored wetlands as an educational experience for area residents.

**Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency Coalition Assessment Grant**  
*\$250,000 for petroleum*

EPA has selected the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency for a brownfields assessment coalition grant. Community-wide petroleum grant funds will be used to conduct seven Phase I and three Phase II environmental site assessments. Grant funds also will be used to inventory sites, develop cleanup plans, and conduct community outreach activities.

**Community Description**

The Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency (RPA) was selected to receive a brownfields assessment coalition grant. The RPA's coalition partners are Hamilton County, the City of Chattanooga, and the Southeast Tennessee Development District. The coalition represents 10 counties (combined population 609,262) in southeast Tennessee. The region has a rich industrial past characterized by textile mills and manufacturing and commercial operations scattered throughout urban core communities. During the past four decades, economic decline has left the region with abandoned and potentially contaminated industrial sites. A preliminary inventory of sites has identified 293 brownfields in the RPA area. Several of the sites are adjacent to or near the Tennessee and Hiwassee Rivers and Chattanooga Creek, potentially affecting regional water quality. The unemployment rate in five of the 10 regional counties is about 14 percent. The poverty rates in eight of the 10 counties range from 15 to 27 percent. Brownfield assessments are expected to facilitate site cleanup and encourage reuse.

**City of Saltillo Assessment Grants**

*\$117,000 for hazardous substances*

*\$133,000 for petroleum*

EPA has selected the City of Saltillo for two brownfields assessment grants. Community-wide hazardous substances grant funds will be used to inventory sites and conduct five Phase I and three Phase II environmental site assessments. Petroleum grant funds will be used to inventory sites and conduct eight Phase I and four Phase II

environmental site assessments. Grant funds also will be used to conduct cleanup planning, health monitoring, and community outreach activities.

### **Community Description**

The City of Saltillo was selected to receive two brownfields assessment grants. Saltillo (population 418) is a small, rural community located in southwestern Tennessee. The presence of several vacant, abandoned, and underutilized sites has hindered redevelopment and economic expansion in the city. These sites constitute a significant percentage of available commercial land area within the city. Losses in the manufacturing base, particularly the closing of a blue jeans plant, have had profound economic effects on Saltillo. The city's unemployment rate is 12.4 percent, and the average household income is less than half the state's median household income. Brownfield assessments are expected to serve as a catalyst for developing a systematic and proactive approach to site cleanup and redevelopment in Saltillo.

### **Shelby County Assessment Grants**

*\$200,000 for hazardous substances*

*\$200,000 for petroleum*

EPA has selected Shelby County for two brownfields assessment grants. Community-wide hazardous substances grant funds will be used to establish and maintain a registry of brownfield sites, conduct 10 Phase I and three Phase II environmental site assessments, and support community outreach activities. Petroleum grant funds will be used to conduct the same tasks at sites with potential petroleum contamination.

### **Community Description**

Shelby County was selected to receive two brownfields assessment grants. The county (population 916,744) plans to address brownfields in a 25-mile-long, two-mile-wide corridor along the Wolf River. Much of this area was originally developed for residential use interspersed with heavy industry. Neighborhood industries from the early 1900s to the 1980s were hardwood lumber mills and associated manufacturing product firms, tire production, chemical manufacturing, and warehouses. Declines in these industries led to significant disinvestment and unemployment. There are more than 100 acres of brownfields and potential brownfields in the target area, most of which are abandoned industrial sites. Poverty rates in the target area range from 20.9 to 35.6 percent, and the area's median household income is substantially lower than the state's. Shelby County is working with public and private sector partners on the Sustainable Shelby initiative, which aims to advance environmentally sustainable development. Brownfield assessments are expected to move this initiative forward and leverage cleanup and redevelopment opportunities in the target area.